



Futurists



CHARMS ON THE BALL FIELD

Various Good Luck Tokens Affected by the Players.

RABBITS' FEET HID UNDER BASES

Athletes of the Diamond Bewildered with Numerous Superstitions—Mascots and Idols Are Succumbed by Charms.

If that block of nice white rubber known as the "home plate," which marks the capitol corner of the big league ball diamonds, were raised in the sight of a gathering of fans and a few shovelfuls of the under soil carefully shaken out, something of interest to fandom might be revealed.

What's under the plate? Most fans don't even have a suspicion that there is anything but earth and possibly some of the little ground worms which infest it.

But the first shovelful taken from beneath the home plate at the polo grounds and jostled timidly might shake out a collection of rabbits' feet and other luck tokens in a manner not unlike a farmhand pictures when in the act of digging potatoes. The rabbits' feet and so forth are there in profusion. And the same may be said of all the other big league ball fields.

Like the actor, the base ballist is beset with numerous superstitions. The team, with few exceptions, will freely admit it; not so with the athletes of the turf diamond. Ball players are something either less or more normal than the average man in this respect, whichever way one cares to consider it. They possess a great deal of originality of character. Under close observation even the noisy McGraw, when away from the scenes of combat, is a silent little gentleman who shows a disposition to avoid the discussion of all matters pertaining to the game.

How to Start Something.

Don't ever tell a professional base ball player that he is superstitious, unless you wish to "start something" like the response to a kick at a dog suffering with distemper. That mild accusation would probably be met with prompt and vigorous denial, because the crowning principle of his disavowed adherence to occultism has become a feeling that it should be followed in the dark, without visible sign or publicity. For this reason all maintenance of or interest in mascots, has become a dead issue in the pennant campaigns of professional base ball organizations.

In base ball circles they invoke the aid of the goddess of fortune with charms and sacrifices exclusively new, mascots and idols having proved futile. "Iron Man" Joe McGinnity's little boy was the last of the mascots at the polo grounds, and the destruction of the statue of Billiken, which was placed at the extreme center field boundary early this season, wound up the career of idols, locally, at least.

White colors, figures and strange occurrences are potent factors in the superstitions of the base ballists, they have more faith in the lucky powers of a rabbit's foot than in any other emblem of good fortune. It that rabbit's foot has been taken from a bunny captured in the traditional way—coming from a cemetery hastily at midnight with the moon shining—there is sure enough luck in it. But the men of the grass diamond have decided that good fortune will not grow in one's pocket. These method seems to be to plant all such articles or objects in the ground, where they want the luck to grow and flourish most.

Every railroad train that passes through the southland, where the ball players go for spring training, is met at the stations by pickaninnies, displaying rabbits' feet guaranteed to have been secured in the manner mentioned above. These are chased by the players when making their return trip northward for the express purpose of laying them to rest—or rather, putting them to work—under the new rubber plate which is set in the diamond just prior to the opening of every league pennant season.

The act of placing this plate is sometimes truly a solemn and mystic ceremony. It is said to have been performed at the polo grounds at midnight with only players, groundkeeper and club officials present. After making a complete search of the confines of the inclosure to insure against the presence of outsiders, the entrances were tightly barred. By the light of a solitary lantern the groundkeeper removed the old rubber, the enchantments were placed in the soil, and the new rubber adjusted with much solemnity.

Among the colors that interest all regular base ball cohorts, dark olive green is the most popular, while red or yellow in their brilliant hues torment and are profoundly eschewed. Many advertising signs at the base ball parks have been changed to satisfy the color fancies of the players. For the same reason grandstands and fences have been repainted, and even the color of all rain checks changed.

All figures are lucky. Even the despised "13" is not singled out as a numeral to be avoided.

The discovery of the "spitball"—that famous pitching delivery which is believed to have destroyed Jack Chesbro's effectiveness, and which is now "insect" Raymond's last and only hope—is involved in superstition. Elmer Stricklett, the ex-Trojan pitcher who is generally credited with having introduced the "spitball," claims to have received the "revelation" through a habit of aiming expectation at the leather-covered sphere before starting his delivery. If he missed the target it was a bad omen, but he had such fine control of his explosive saliva that he rarely ever missed.

Another omen of ill fortune which disturbs the ball player's gentle peace of mind happens whenever he dons his clothes, whether it be his citizen's attire or the livery of the sport. Should he start to draw on any portion of the wardrobe in hand from the rear, so that the buttons come inside, misfortune is surely going to befall him. And if the piece be an under-

garment it is invariably allowed to remain reversed.

Every base ball field of importance is something of a treasure field. Various trinkets supposed to possess the stimulation of luck are buried about the center of playing positions. For the charm believed to bear good fortune to the base ball man of the hour is never active in either practical or ornamental use. No jewelry, not even a plain band ring, is worn by the players during a contest, and if a ring is presumed to have achieved a boon of fortune for its owner away from the ball field, no matter how valuable, it is liable to be cast beneath the sod at the player's home field.

Bats, as they come from the manufacturer, may be lucky or unlucky. There is a way to test their occult properties in this direction, which every professional base ball player indulges in. No bat is carried to the plate for use in a pennant contest until it has been proved to "contain" a satisfactory percentage of bass' bites in practice. Every batsman selects a number of sticks from the new pile and marks them for his own particular use. After that these particular bats are not even handled by the others, unless it be by some new recruit from the minors, who receives prompt reproof and sometimes chastisement for such act.

The bats of the big league batsmen not only have a loosely calculated base hit average before they are wielded in battle, but the same approximate sort of record is followed afterward. Some extremists in this practice carefully preserve the exact figures.

Konus Warner, the mightiest of latter day sluggers of record, having broken the last of the bigdugouts with which he has won batting championships for himself and pennants for Pittsburgh, is said to have tested the virtues of a carload of bats this season, and found "nary one" that pleased him.—New York Telegram.

NATIONAL ON BOSTON LINKS

Interest of Golfers Begins to Center on Big Amateur Match.

BOSTON, Aug. 20.—With the national amateur golf championship only a matter of a few weeks golfers are beginning to give a thought to the Brookline Country club links, over which the big event is this year to be held. Herbert Jacques, president of the United States Golf association, has arrived from his summer place in Canada to supervise the work of getting the grounds in order and also of seeing to it that the accommodations for the crowd will be right. Local players are making no secret of their intentions to make the tournament a record one in every way.

Another indication of the interest that is being taken in the forthcoming struggle is the fact that intending contestants from all over the country are arriving at Brookline for a whirl around what is declared to be one of the best courses in the country. The layout is declared to be almost perfect, while as a test of golf they also state this year's selection will be hard indeed to beat. The prophets are already at work with their forecasts of the scores that will qualify. One of these thinks that anything under 80 will be a very fine score over the remodelled links.

Along Auto Row

Making All Along the Line Are Making Announcement of Their New Cars for the Year 1911.

"There is a great contrast," said H. E. Fredrickson, local representative of the Chalmers Motor company, "between the letters we receive from country agents these days and the ones we used to receive eight or ten years ago. In looking through some old letters the other day I came across one that today looks positively funny, but which was taken as a matter of course at the time it was written. The date of this letter was February 2, 1901, and is said in part:

"I am getting to be a great demonstrator. Have given four demonstrations in the last four weeks and can handle the tiler as well as the next one, although I buried out the boiler yesterday, and I want you to send some one to fit it up right away."
"We are spending more time here with horses. There is a runaway nearly every time I take the machine out and this in spite of the fact that I do most of my driving over the same strip of road so that I won't meet many new teams. They are talking of passing laws to keep horse-drawn carriages off the roads entirely. In fact, half of my neighbors do not speak to me now."

"Today our agency letters look like government crop reports. The rural dealers discuss the crop conditions and talk about the prospect of the farmers having plenty of money with which to buy automobiles. Today it is the farmer who is buying the car. It is the farmer who wants good roads and liberal automobile legislation. It is the farmer who gets arrested most for exceeding the speed limit in the small towns, but above all it is the farmer who demands a good car and knows one when he sees it. He spends more time here with any one else reading automobile literature, and frequently can back a mechanic off the boards on technical points. Farmers not only know cars, but they know a great deal of the inside information."

"A prominent man from the country was in our showroom the other day, and in looking over the 1910 Chalmers specifications, he remarked: 'I can see the hand of the designer, Dunham, in every one of these changes. I have been watching his career ever since he entered the game at Lansing.'"

Mr. Guy L. Smith is congratulating himself upon the opportunity afforded him since last December of showing what an old Franklin will do.

At that time he placed at the disposal of the Omaha police department, pending the arrival of two Franklin patrol cars, a six-cylinder Franklin touring car which had been in constant service since February, 1907, making 1,800 calls without missing a single call. It performed so well in fact that upon the recommendation of Mayor Dahlman it was purchased by the Dahlman Motor company for his use in his recent campaign for nomination for governor.

During this campaign nearly every town was visited between the Missouri river and the sand hills of the northwest. On the night of August 15, after having made a speech at Fremont, the mayor was booked for a down talk in Omaha and South Omaha. The mayor was told that the roads east of Fremont were impassible. Between Fremont and the West Dodge macadam the machine plowed, at times through mud and water up to the running boards. One of the passengers said: "The billows of mud and water that rolled off to either side as we rolled along made one think he was riding in a battleship. At times when delays would have meant seriously impairing our itinerary, the Franklin never failed once. Frequently there was no road save the old Indian trail. A conservative estimate of the distance travelled is 4,800 miles. We crossed the line into Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota and Iowa, and on primary day—the flag bedecked, mud besmudged car stood in front of the city hall, awaiting the pleasure of the mayor, as intent as the moving throng was on its political mission, few passing without stopping to examine curiously the old War hero as one of the dubs it. It was not realized that they were looking at a car that had so triumphantly finished a total of 7,000 miles and was still far from worn out."

Henry H. Van Brunt was at the Overland factory week selecting such 1911 models as he has found serviceable for Iowa and Nebraska. These machines will come forward during the next few weeks and the big sale will begin. The Overland has not had a mushroom growth in this section of the country. It has gone along step by step meeting the requirements of both the town and country gentleman until the demand for it has outgrown the supply of it. It has been nip and tuck for the Van Brunts to keep peace with their customers until they supplied them, but they have finally done it, and to meet every such future contingency, a large enough contract for 1911 models has been closed to make deliveries promptly.

Lewis Doty, manager of the Maxwell-Briscoe Omaha company, is receiving his new cars. The Maxwell is one of the first cars which had a sale in Omaha. It was pushed hard at the outset and it has never been out of the people's mind. It is regarded as one of the most acceptable machines in all models that was ever put upon the market. The small runabout has had few equals. It is a neat little car and runs along easily and keeps in order. The other and larger models are better than ever. They are trimmer and stronger and faster. The price of the Maxwell has not been increased, but it is believed that more good things are embodied in the 1911 makeups than were ever added to a former model.

It is refreshing to listen to George Reim tell of the Cadillac's capers from Detroit to Chicago and to Omaha. He and Drummond drove it. Reim is an old racing man. He was with the White Steamer people back east years ago. Then he was with the Stevens people in Chicago, and since he was in Omaha he has handled the Cadillac for Kimball. Since Reim and Drummond got the agency of this machine a few months since and took it up to Charles Louks' garage, Reim has been a happy boy. He forgot his lost dog. He has been working and the people pretty generally know that the Cadillac is his for keeps.

The new models have attracted a great deal of attention and people have already begun to buy them.

"To see so many ladies and girls drive machines through your streets makes one think that automobiles are, after all, about the simplest, handiest invention of the age," remarked an eastern man last week. He went on to say that the restrictions thrown around the driving of cars in some sections of the country intended to be safeguards are not only not safeguards at all, but are rather productive of accidents. Pedestrians should not be reprimanded on their part being on trouble as often as reckless driving does. It is about as difficult for a careful driver to save a daring person in the street as it is for a careful person in the street to avoid a reckless driver.

"Talk about these endurance runs," said an automobile man last week, "they may be all right, but I have never seen where they do good. Nobody sees them except those who happen to be on the roadside, and it's slip and gone and they know precious little whether the engine is 'hitting' or 'missing.' Then look at the junk piled up when the event is over. Sprung axles, punctured, lost seats, broken lamps, scarred bodies and a hundred and one ailments, that almost any car would be a year coming to with ordinary use. I do think a hill climb somewhere around Omaha, well advertised so that everybody might go out and see it, would be a capital event; don't you?"

Can anything be the matter with the report of the secretary of the state of Nebraska in the matter of automobiles registered during the last few months? None of the dealers have manifested a great deal of interest in that report. Not long ago about all of them were digging for it. Every fellow could point to a splendid shining. About as many cars as ever have been sold, and the different dealers seem to be holding their own. If no material change for the sale of machines has taken place, this may account for the lack of interest in that report.

The great New York editor, Arthur Brisbane, made the bankers think when he began to talk in Omaha last month. When he said that a man had a right to borrow money to buy a car, he began to talk about a principle dear to Americans. Upon the heels of that speech came the message from bankers from about every section of the country denouncing the policy of denouncing to make loans to those who wished to buy cars.

Doherty is one of the salesmen sent out by the Mason factory to assist Freeland Bros. & Ashley in the distribution of those two train loads of Maytags advertised in last week's Bee. Doherty's notice is particularly about the hill climbs of these cars. "We can climb hills so steep as to tip the car over—it's a fact," he said. The salesman went on to say that his factory would erect a 50 per cent grade at the Nebraska State Fair this year, and that the Mason would take it every day with 4 people in the car. The Maytag is doing some clever stunts, now climbing the steps at the high school grounds.

"The factory ought to furnish the cars for endurance runs," said a dealer. "A run of any value at all means rather hard use, and the manufacturer derives more benefit from the advertisement of a winning car than the local dealers. The car's performance is advertised all over the country, and is an asset for every agent of the company everywhere." The dealer went on to say that if a car has a mishap, the dealer loses. And he comes through without a scratch he finds that he will have a "wear and tear" item. It is understood that many factories stand the expense of these endurance runs, and all of them might share with the dealer if the matter was brought to their notice properly.

Racine-Battley company have begun to push the Firestone-Columbus again vigorously, and the popular car will have to be reckoned with, when the other fellows make their figures.

The Brush—that great little car, which the T. G. Northwall company has sent flying like a shuttlecock into almost every nook and corner of Nebraska and Iowa—is doing the best sort of things all over the west. The Brush, Mr. Northwall says, is the car of perfection. It's the car of individuality; the car that goes and comes in its own way, and that does it about as quickly as the cars costing many times more.

Denise Barkalow had a crowd of enthusiasts around him yesterday. They were interested in a statement that he had received from the Packard people. It was the annual statement for the last fiscal year of the company, showing that the total output for 1910 was 3,570 cars, an increase of 370 over the 1909 output. During the year the number of men on the company's payroll increased from 4,715 to 7,311, and the floor space was increased from twenty-three to thirty-three acres.

The Omaha speedway is about completed, and during this week the grandstand, bandstand, judges' and reporters' stands will be erected. The first event will be September 4. From the outlook this will be one of the most liberally patronized tracks ever opened in Omaha.

Colonel J. J. Deright is in the game "strong." The Stoddard-Dayton, which he has made famous in Nebraska and Iowa, and for which he has made a demand always to exceed his supply, is built along prettier lines than ever. The body is lower to the ground and is elegant because it is simple. The dash is freed from everything except the dial and starter button. Accessibility is made a feature of the make-up. In general, the machine is made stronger all the way and is far more desirable.

The 1911 Cadillac "scurry" made its appearance in Omaha last week, and is certainly creating a wide sensation. There are a number of improvements in this new car over the 1910. The power has been increased and the car has now a 44-hp motor. The four cylinders are cast singly, with copper jackets applied, retaining the exclusive Cadillac features throughout. The car is increased in comfort, the wheel base being increased from 130 to 138 inches. It has been improved in appearance, having a double drop frame, which makes the car

set lower, and a larger hood and more roomy tonneau.

The radiator is larger, hence it has greater cooling capacity. This is notwithstanding the fact that the Cadillac was never deficient in that respect.

The axle is of the full floating type. The car is equipped with larger brakes, and larger brake drums, giving greatly increased efficiency. It has contracting and expanding double acting brakes, both equalized.

There are two complete and independent ignition systems, each with its own set of spark plugs. The two ignition systems consist of Bosch high tension magnets, and the new and improved Deleo system with single unit coil and high tension distributor. Either system alone is efficient for operating the car.

All electric wiring is enclosed in copper tubes. Copper manifolds are used for water inlet and outlets in the circulating system. The lubrication is by the same Cadillac exclusive system, automatic splash.

The transmission is of the selective type, three speeds forward and one reverse. The drive is a direct shaft with two universal joints running in oil bath. Thirty-four inch by four inch tires are used.

Denise Barkalow is the man who made the electric machine go in Omaha. His name is so interwoven with this business that the thought of electric cars suggests Barkalow. It is said that it does not matter whether a customer uses a Baker or Bosch or Lange, or another manufacturer, that customer first consults Barkalow. Barkalow has put on the Packard, and these manufacturers couldn't have selected a dealer so well equipped to handle this famous machine as he.

In the outset the Packard has gone ahead and it goes without saying that Barkalow will honey-comb Nebraska with it before he gets through with it.

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